



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

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Governor Rell: State Gets Disaster Declaration, Initial Federal Aid for March Storms Now Available

*Aid Will Defray Costs Incurred by State, Local Governments;
Governor's Broader Request for Individual Assistance Still Pending*

Governor M. Jodi Rell today announced that President Obama has approved her request for a "major disaster declaration" in response to the severe storms in March. The declaration will speed financial assistance to the state and hard-pressed municipal governments in three counties: Fairfield, Middlesex and New London.

Governor Rell's broader request for federal aid to affected individuals – homeowners and renters long with businesses – in the three declared counties as well as New Haven and Windham counties is still pending before President Obama.

"This is the beginning of critical and welcome news for Connecticut," Governor Rell said. "Our state and local governments have been pushed to the limit – and in many cases beyond – by the task of responding to storms that caused extraordinary damage across the state. Police departments, fire departments and other first responders were on call for extended hours while governments at all levels struggled to help homeowners dealing with wind damage, uprooted trees, crushed cars and lengthy power outages.

"I grateful to President Obama and the federal government for this initial step in helping our state recover from these devastating storms," the Governor said. "I also want to thank our Congressional delegation for their support of and work on the application for assistance. My office will continue to work closely with our delegation and our federal partners as we seek additional federal assistance for the hard-pressed homeowners and employers who have also been deeply affected by these severe storms."

FEMA and the state Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS), will be conducting Applicant Briefings in each affected county over the next two weeks. At these briefings representatives from the affected municipalities in these counties will have an opportunity to:

- Receive an overview of the FEMA Public Assistance Program
- Have an opportunity to apply for direct assistance under the FEMA Public Assistance program
- Have an opportunity to have their questions answered by representatives of DEMHS and FEMA

Earlier this month, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and state Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) officials tallied losses from severe storms on March 12-14 and March 29-30, providing the Governor with additional information she used to make her request for disaster aid.

Governor Rell earlier announced an unprecedented state loan program to help with urgent structural repairs and the replacement of critical appliances such as furnaces and water heaters. Information on the program can be found on the Connecticut Housing Investment Fund (CHIF) Web site at www.chif.org.

The loans, offered at an interest rate of 2 percent, will cover the repair of damage to basements, foundations, roofs and insulation and the purchase of critical appliances such as furnaces and hot water heaters that were damaged from basement flooding.

The loans include maximum limits of:

- \$20,000 for structural repair
- \$750 for hot water heaters
- \$7,000 for furnaces

The governor said residents may also visit the DEMHS website (www.ct.gov/demhs) for additional storm related information.